

Questions and Answers

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Security Assessment by a Professional Security Consultant

INTRODUCTION

A security assessment is an important tool used to evaluate the security risks at a development and to formulate a plan of action to address those risks.

In some properties with more complex security problems an assessment performed by a professional security consultant may be advisable. In all cases the joint cooperation and involvement of residents and management in resolving security problems is critical.

Q: When should a security assessment be performed by a professional security consultant?

A: In some properties with complex security problems an assessment should be performed by a professional security consultant in cooperation with local law enforcement. The security assessment should address:

- o illegal criminal activity
- o graffiti
- o vandalism
- o resident's concern about safety
- o existing security which is ineffective
- o distressed or problem properties
- o failure of current system to protect the residents

Q: How do we locate a qualified security consultant to perform the security assessment?

A: A qualified security consultant may be located through:

- o membership associations
 - American Association for Industrial Security (ASIS) tel. no.
 - Associated Licensed Detectives of New York tel. no.
 - real estate trade associations
- o Yellow Pages under "security consultants"
- o referrals from local police, public housing authority
- o trade referrals
- o Security Industry Buyer's Guide

Q: How do we evaluate a security consultant?

A: A security consultant must facilitate meetings with management and tenants to become familiar with the property and problems. The security consultant may be evaluated using the following criteria:

- o licensing
 - state authorized and bonded as a private investigator to act as a security consultant
- o experience in performing assessments in similar housing projects
- o UCC for any lawsuits pending
- o Better Business Bureau
- o references
- o resume
- o list of other assessments conducted
- o copies of other assessments conducted
- o proposed scope of security assessment
- o comparative cost
- o planned resident involvement

Q: What should be included in the security assessment?

A: A security assessment should include the elements below in addition to any other specific internal/external factors directly affecting the property.

- o internal security
 - security guard service
 - locks/access/ID
 - interior lighting
 - lobby
 - halls
 - stairwells
 - elevators
 - cctv system
 - handicapped / emergency evacuation routes plans
 - fire alarm system/program
 - sprinkler system
 - maintenance personnel involvement in security program
 - architectural design and layout/ ingress and egress
 - control/oversight of security systems
 - management policy and systems
 - resident selection procedures
 - eviction policy procedures
 - house rules and lease terms
 - staff hiring policy/procedures
 - identification of helpful police and community programs